



Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid, Female Scholar of the 21st Century: Pioneer in Gender Transformation and Islamic Education in Lombok-West Nusa Tenggara

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran sentral Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid sebagai ulama perempuan abad ke-21 yang menjadi pelopor dalam transformasi gender dan pengembangan pendidikan Islam di Lombok, Nusa Tenggara Barat. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengungkap pengaruh kepemimpinan Sitti Raihanun dalam mereformulasi peran perempuan melalui kepemimpinannya di organisasi Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) serta kontribusinya dalam pendirian institusi pendidikan Islam. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif yang didukung metode hermeneutik, penelitian ini memanfaatkan data dari wawancara mendalam bersama anggota NW, tokoh masyarakat, dan Sitti Raihanun sendiri, serta telaah dokumen organisasi dan pidato-pidatonya. Penelitian ini dikonstruksikan dengan kerangka teori feminisme Islam, transformasi sosial, dan kepemimpinan perempuan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan Sitti Raihanun dibentuk oleh warisan nilai religius dan moral keluarga, kharisma institusional, serta visi strategis dalam mendorong keterlibatan perempuan dalam kepemimpinan Islam. Meskipun menghadapi resistensi patriarkal dan kontroversi internal, ia berhasil menerapkan model kepemimpinan transformasional dan karismatik. Kontribusinya terlihat melalui pendirian ratusan lembaga pendidikan dan perluasan jaringan dakwah secara nasional. Studi ini memberikan pemahaman mendalam tentang dinamika transformasi gender dalam pendidikan Islam serta pentingnya kepemimpinan perempuan yang inklusif dalam mendorong perubahan sosial dan pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid, Ulama Perempuan, Transformasi Gender, Pendidikan Islam, Kepemimpinan Transformasional

Abstract

This study investigates the pivotal role of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid as a 21st century female Islamic scholar who pioneered gender transformation and Islamic education in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. The research aims to uncover her influence in reshaping gender roles through her leadership in Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) and her extensive contributions to building educational institutions. Anchored in feminist theories, social transformation frameworks, and female leadership paradigms, this study contextualizes her role in the broader discourse on gender equality in Islamic education. Employing a qualitative descriptive method with a hermeneutic approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with NW members, local community figures, and Sitti Raihanun herself, as well as analysis of organizational documents and her public speeches. The findings reveal that her leadership was shaped by a strong moral and religious upbringing, institutional charisma, and a strategic vision to promote women's leadership within Islamic contexts. Despite facing patriarchal resistance and leadership controversies, she effectively implemented a transformative and charismatic leadership model. Her efforts resulted in the establishment of hundreds of Islamic schools and an expanded da'wah network across Indonesia. This study contributes to a nuanced understanding of gender transformation in Islamic education and highlights the importance of inclusive female leadership in advancing educational and societal change.

Keywords: *Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid, Female Ulama, Gender Transformation, Islamic Education, Transformative Leadership*

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the transformation of gender roles in Islamic education has become a crucial issue in the development of educational models that emphasize equity and inclusivity. In Lombok, this transformation has found a prominent agent of change in the figure of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid, who emerged as a pioneering female leader in the 21st century (Larasati & Ayu, 2020). Her role in establishing Islamic educational institutions from the ground up—despite limited resources—illustrates a significant shift in how women engage with and contribute to religious education (Cholil, 2010). These educational institutions not only focus on academic achievement but also cultivate character and leadership, particularly for women, within the context of Islamic values (Fakih, 2010). This demonstrates that educational leadership in Islamic contexts is not limited by gender and that female figures can successfully transform traditional structures through innovative strategies. As a result, this study identifies the emergence of women like Sitti Raihanun as a critical development in addressing the persistent gap between Islamic educational practice and gender inclusion.

The relevance of exploring the role of Sitti Raihanun lies in her capacity to bridge institutional gaps and promote inclusive Islamic education at both regional and national levels. Her life and leadership offer critical insights into the integration of religious, educational, and gender paradigms within modern Indonesian society (Azmi & Wardi, 2020). Her initiatives have expanded beyond the borders of Lombok, creating waves of influence in other provinces such as Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Batam (Prantiasih, 2012). These widespread impacts demonstrate the interconnectedness between grassroots educational movements and national discourses on gender equity in religious contexts. Her legacy underscores the intersection of gender, religion, and education as domains that cannot be understood in isolation but must be analyzed through dynamic, context-based perspectives. Therefore, studying Sitti Raihanun's leadership is highly relevant to contemporary debates in Islamic education, particularly as societies strive toward more equitable systems that challenge patriarchal norms while preserving core religious values.

Existing literature on gender transformation in Islamic education reveals a rich body of work addressing institutional change, feminist movements, and curriculum reform, yet few studies focus explicitly on female pioneers operating within conservative religious environments (Nasri & Atsani, 2024; Yousaf et al., 2023). While studies have documented broader gender reforms in Islamic educational settings, detailed biographical accounts of female religious educators remain scarce. Prior works tend to generalize institutional evolution or emphasize male leadership, leaving a critical gap in understanding the experiences and strategies of female ulama such as Sitti Raihanun (Ladyanna & Gyem, 2022; Yousaf et al., 2023). This study seeks to address that gap by offering a focused, in-depth exploration of her transformative leadership, thus contributing not only to gender discourse in education but also to the historiography of female Islamic scholars. Such contributions are essential for expanding the epistemological framework of Islamic education and legitimizing the position of women as central actors in its development.

This study adopts a multi-theoretical framework, drawing on feminist theories, social transformation theories, and leadership frameworks in Islamic education to

analyze the life and work of Sitti Raihanun. Feminist theories provide the conceptual tools to interrogate traditional gender hierarchies and identify spaces for female agency within religious structures (Afiful Ikhwan et al., 2022; Muafiah, 2013). Social transformation theories offer insights into how individual leaders initiate and sustain structural changes within communities (Towaf, 2008). In parallel, frameworks on women's leadership in Islamic educational institutions contextualize the unique position of female educators who operate within religious traditions while promoting progressive values (Anggraeni et al., 2023; Muzayanah & Anggraeni, 2023; Zubair et al., 2022). This combined approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of how Sitti Raihanun strategically positioned herself as both a religious authority and a reformist. Thus, this theoretical framework underpins the analytical lens through which her contributions to gender transformation and Islamic education are interpreted and evaluated.

The primary objective of this research is to examine how Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid, as a female Islamic educator, initiated and institutionalized gender transformation in Lombok's Islamic educational landscape. Responding to the limited attention given to female religious figures in earlier studies (Leong & Tan, 2013), this paper aims to investigate the strategies and values she employed to navigate traditional religious authority while advocating for inclusive education. More specifically, the study explores how her leadership model challenges conventional paradigms and promotes sustainable female participation in Islamic educational leadership. By doing so, this research seeks to uncover both the ideological and operational aspects of her legacy, with implications for designing gender-equitable educational policies. It is expected that this study will make a meaningful contribution to the academic literature on Islamic education, gender studies, and leadership models in Southeast Asian Muslim communities.

This article argues that the leadership of Sitti Raihanun represents a case of charismatic and transformative leadership that redefines the gender narrative within Islamic educational spaces. The hypothesis driving this research posits that her ability to lead stems from a combination of spiritual charisma, institutional acumen, and contextual adaptation to socioreligious environments in Lombok. Her

dual roles—as a religious teacher and a female leader—are not mutually exclusive but mutually reinforcing, particularly in contexts that historically limit female agency. Statistical data from national educational bodies indicate persistent gender disparity in Islamic leadership roles, with women occupying less than 15% of senior educational positions in pesantren nationwide (Kemenag RI, 2022). In light of this disparity, the case of Sitti Raihanun stands as an exception that may serve as a model for alternative leadership pathways. The paper therefore, contends that her model of leadership can inform broader policy and community-based initiatives to strengthen women’s roles in Islamic education across Indonesia.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to offer a nuanced portrait of gender reform within Islamic education, grounded in lived experience and contextual leadership. By focusing on the achievements of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid, this study foregrounds the importance of inclusive historical narratives that elevate female agency in religious education. Her work offers valuable lessons not only for scholars and educators but also for policymakers seeking to create gender-balanced educational systems. This research thus provides a roadmap for further studies that seek to explore the role of female ulama in different Indonesian regions and opens avenues for comparative work with Muslim societies globally. As such, this article aims to foster a deeper understanding of how gender, leadership, and education intersect in transformative ways, contributing to a more comprehensive and just vision of Islamic educational development.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate the transformative role of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid in the development of Islamic education and gender transformation in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. The unit of analysis focuses on her leadership practices, institutional contributions, and sociocultural influence as a female scholar. This research positions Sitti Raihanun as a key figure whose legacy offers valuable insights into female religious leadership in a predominantly male-dominated Islamic educational context. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding how individual agency

intersects with institutional structures to produce meaningful change in gender perspectives within Islamic education.

The choice of a qualitative approach is grounded in the need to explore complex, context-specific phenomena that require interpretive depth. Qualitative research enables the investigation of values, beliefs, and socio-historical experiences that shape Sitti Raihanun's leadership. Furthermore, this approach is suitable for analyzing the symbolic meanings embedded in her leadership discourse and public reception. The study draws upon case study logic to examine her influence as both an individual leader and a systemic actor within Nahdlatul Wathan's educational network. Through detailed contextualization, the research captures the nuances of her role in promoting educational inclusivity.

Data collection was conducted through triangulated methods, including in-depth interviews, document analysis, and participant observation. Primary data was obtained through interviews with Sitti Raihanun herself, educators affiliated with Nahdlatul Wathan, community leaders, and alumni of her educational institutions. These interviews provided first-hand perspectives on her strategies, vision, and community impact. The research also utilized organizational records, her public speeches, and written publications as secondary sources. Additionally, the researcher conducted field observations in selected educational settings established by Sitti Raihanun to assess how gender-equitable values are implemented within pedagogical and institutional practices.

Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, comprising three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. In the reduction phase, significant narrative and textual data were selected based on relevance to the research questions. These data were then organized and displayed thematically to identify recurring patterns and leadership traits. Finally, the interpretive phase involved critical reflection on how Sitti Raihanun's leadership model represents a form of transformative Islamic pedagogy. The use of this analytical approach ensures a holistic understanding of her leadership within the broader context of gender and Islamic education reform in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Sitti Raihanun in Gender Transformation in the 21st Century Islamic Education in Lombok-West Nusa Tenggara

The following research findings provide a comprehensive overview of the background, experiences, and role of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid in the context of gender transformation, particularly in the development of Islamic education in Lombok. Data obtained through extensive interviews with Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) members and local community figures, coupled with a meticulous analysis of NW archives and speeches by Sitti Raihanun, unveiled several noteworthy discoveries (Interview on October 15, 2023) as follows:

Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid's leadership in Nahdlatul Wathan reflects her deep commitment to Islamic values inherited from her family. As the first female leader in Lombok of this organization, founded by her father, she played a crucial role in establishing the al-Mujahidin Islamic boarding school, fostering religious values and patriotism. Her engagement underscores her dedication to Islamic teachings and organizational growth, contributing to gender transformation in Islamic education. Her childhood experiences highlight the significance of moral values in shaping her character and understanding of the Islamic struggle, emphasizing her pivotal role in promoting gender equality within Islamic education in Lombok.

Based on the interview data, several elements of gender transformation theory can be connected. Firstly, Structural and Organizational Changes. Gender transformation often involves changes in social and organizational structures (Julia Cleves Mosse, 2002). In the case of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid becoming the first female leader in Nahdlatul Wathan, this reflects a change in power dynamics and organizational structures, which are now more inclusive of women (Daulay, Harmona et al., 2019).

Secondly, the Role of Female Leaders. Gender transformation theory highlights the vital role of female leaders in changing gender norms and societal expectations. Sitti Raihanun plays a role as an agent of change, inspiring shifts in societal views on the role of women, especially in religious and social contexts (Wibowo, Dwi Edi, 2011).

Thirdly, Women's Participation in Various Fields. With a focus on the organizational struggles of Nahdlatul Wathan in education, social, and missionary aspects, the presence of female leaders can reflect an increase in women's participation in various aspects of life, demonstrating gender integration in various organizational activities (Shastri, Andrey, 2021)

Fourthly, Empowerment of Women. Gender transformation often impacts women's empowerment in education, economics, and society (Umar, Nasaruddin, 2010). The involvement of women in leadership positions in the most prominent organizations, such as Nahdlatul Wathan, can be seen as a real portrait of women's empowerment in the local context (Kania, Dede, 2015).

The Leadership of Women in Nahdlatul Wathan: A Focus on Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid

After the passing of its founder, Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid took on the leadership of Nahdlatul Wathan as the Grand Executive (PB NW), marking a significant transition in the organization's history. This research sheds light on her leadership as the first female leader engaged in various educational, social, and missionary activities within Nahdlatul Wathan. The findings provide insights into her multifaceted role and contributions.

1. Biography

In her educational journey, Ummuna, the affectionate moniker for Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid, advanced from *SD Negeri 2 Pancor*, one of public primary schools in Pancor-East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, to *MTs.* and *M.A.* (junior and senior secondary high schools) Mu'alimat NW Pancor. Despite her formal education in these institutions, her parents, serving as spiritual and physical guides, significantly contributed to her intellectual and spiritual development. This specialized education laid a robust foundation for Ummuna's intellect and capabilities.

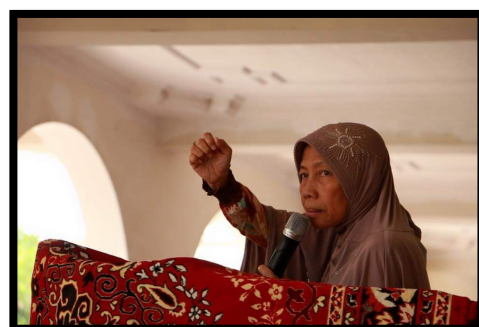


Figure 1: Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid

Figure 2: Documentation of Sitti Raihanun
Actively Preaching Around

Born in 1952 to Hajjah Rahmatullah Binti Hasan Jenggik and Maulana al-Syaikh TGKH. M. Zainuddin Abdul Majid founded Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) in West Nusa Tenggara and was the first national hero figure in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. Ummuna's (Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid) academic prowess shone through at every level of her education, reflecting her dedication to excellence. Her marriage to Drs. H. L. Gede Wiresantane resulted in seven children, including K.H. Lalu Gede M. Zainuddin Atsani (elected the Chairman of PB NW in 2019) showcases her success in nurturing a family.

Despite discontinuing her undergraduate studies at Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, one of public Islamic universities in Malang-East Java, Indonesia, in the third semester, Ummuna remained actively engaged in women's organizations and government bureaucracy. Her pinnacle in Nahdlatul Wathan came with her election as the Chairman of PB NW at the tenth congress in 1998, showcasing her resilience and contributions. Choosing not to seek positions but to safeguard Nahdlatul Wathan as a trustee reflects her visionary leadership, which is rooted in the organization's values. As the daughter of NW's founder, she received a mandate to continue the organization's struggle. Her election marked a historic moment amid a rival congress, adding a controversial dimension to Nahdlatul Wathan's history. This finding offers insights into Ummuna's life and leadership, highlighting pivotal moments in Nahdlatul Wathan's journey.

2. Charisma and Public Office: A Comprehensive Analysis of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid's Leadership Journey

Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid's inherited charisma distinguished her leadership in Nahdlatul Wathan (NW), founded by her father. Despite not seeking high positions, she viewed her roles in NW as a way of life and responsibility, continuing the organization's struggle after her father's passing. Elected as the Chairman of the Grand Executive Board of NW in 1998, her leadership led to rapid expansion across 18 provinces, growing to 925 madrasahs. Emphasizing

consultation with God and respecting her father's vision, her leadership highlighted dedication and adherence to NW's values.

3. Controversial Opinions about Exceptional Capacity

There are controversial views regarding the exceptional capacity possessed by Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid. Although acknowledged by some as the result of her parents' influence, others see it as a construction of her experiences and personal tenacity during her twenty years of leadership in Nahdlatul Wathan.

4. Religious-Based Leadership and Organizational Vision

Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid leads by focusing on religion as the central point of her every move. Her leadership aligns with the organization's vision, advocating for religion to benefit the wider community (Muharam, R. S., 2020). Her leadership encompasses education, social, and missionary work (Zuhrotun, Ni'mah Siti & Al, Chasna Mienchah, 2021).

5. Challenges and Obstacles

Despite being recognized as a transformational leader, Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid faced significant challenges. External obstacles included the patriarchal social culture and illegal rival leaders controlling areas. Internally, she encountered rejection based on her gender, leading to expulsion from central leadership positions. Nevertheless, she overcame these challenges by establishing an educational institution in Anjani Village, East Lombok Regency, which became the epicenter of all madrasahs under Nahdlatul Wathan.

6. Debate on Authority and Internal Opposition

Religious authority and leadership continued to debate because she was a woman. Although the foundation of women as the highest authority has been established since Nahdlatul Wathan's founding, she experienced manipulative impeachment attempts to remove her name from the highest leadership (Muhtadin, A. M., 2019).

7. Characteristics of a Transformational Leader

Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid embodies the qualities of a transformational leader, displaying traits such as being a change agent, courageous, patient, and adept at navigating complexity and ambiguity. This research provides a nuanced exploration of her leadership, acknowledging her successes and the

challenges she encountered, both internally and externally. It sheds light on the obstacles she faced in advancing gender transformation in Islamic education and how she effectively addressed them.

The Leadership Model and Contributions of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid

Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid demonstrated exceptional leadership during her 20-year tenure, revitalizing Nahdlatul Wathan by establishing regional executives across Indonesia and founding numerous educational institutions. She significantly impacted education and organizational development by managing the large Pondok Pesantren Syaikh Zainuddin NW Anjani. Additionally, her role as a People's Consultative Assembly (MPR RI) member in 1999 showcased her national-level influence.

1. The Role of Sitti Raihanun in Gender Transformation

The research provides a comprehensive overview of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid's role in gender transformation, focusing on her contributions to Islamic education in Lombok. It highlights her influence beyond Nahdlatul Wathan (NW), portraying her as a positive female leader in West Nusa Tenggara. Key factors shaping her transformative role include her family background, active involvement in NW, and inheritance of moral values and intelligence from her parents.

Sitti Raihanun made extraordinary contributions to Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) as the General Chairperson from 1998 to 2021. She expanded traveling da'wah across Lombok and Indonesia, conducting over 100 visits with hundreds of attendees each. She also established several madrasahs, notably MA (Islamic senior secondary school) Nurul Mujahidah NW Tanjung Selor in North Kalimantan, which now has around 200 students. Additionally, she pioneered Pam Swakarsa, a socio-religious organization focusing on security and spreading NW teachings through activities like funeral rites for Hizbullah members. By 2021, Pam Swakarsa had over 500 active members and participated in over 70 funerals. Her leadership significantly strengthened NW's influence and network. By 2024, Hizbullah membership reached 20,000, reflecting substantial growth in participation.

Women's Leadership within the Nahdlatul Wathan Organization

Insights into the leadership of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid emerged from research findings, encompassing aspects such as her life history, academic achievements, organizational engagements, and leadership within NW's central board. The study finding indicates that Sitti Raihanun is a thriving organizational leader and educator, as evidenced by her contributions to establishing Islamic boarding schools. Her decision to lead NW is rooted not in a pursuit of position but rather in a sense of trust and responsibility inherited from her father (Endah Ratnawaty Chotim, 2022).

Controversial Perspectives on Extraordinary Capacity

Differing views surround Sitti Raihanun's extraordinary capacity. While her parental legacy is acknowledged, skeptical opinions propose that her abilities and accomplishments result more from personal experiences and hard work during her leadership. This controversy highlights various perspectives in evaluating women's leadership in this context.

Charisma and Public Office

The charisma inherited from both her parents significantly impacts Sitti Raihanun's position. Despite not actively seeking positions, her charisma and influence as a female leader add a distinct flavor to her leadership in NW. Additionally, recognition as a member of the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly (MPR RI) indicates her influence and contribution at the national level.

Transformative and Charismatic Leadership

The study findings affirm that Sitti Raihanun employs a transformative and charismatic leadership model. The combination of these leadership characteristics is evident in the organization's dynamism, the establishment of educational institutions, and her influence at the national level. These characteristics are the main pillars of her success and positive contributions to gender transformation in Islamic education.

Contributions of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid

Research data illustrate Sitti Raihanun's significant contributions, both in education and organization. The establishment of hundreds of schools and Islamic boarding schools, the dynamism of the NW organization, and her role in the MPR

RI, the People's Consultative Assembly, are tangible evidence of her positive impact. This empirical finding emphasizes that her contributions extend beyond organizational boundaries, shaping the educational and religious landscape in various provinces in Indonesia.

Sitti Raihanun's success as the first female leader in Nahdlatul Wathan reshaped societal perceptions. Despite initial controversy, she proved her capabilities through significant contributions, notably establishing Pondok Pesantren Syaikh Zainuddin NW in Anjani. This boarding school became a focal point for organizational activities and symbolized women's leadership in religious and educational domains. Her initiative not only challenged traditional gender roles but also inspired the younger generation, fostering a belief in women's leadership capacity. Overall, this research illuminates Sitti Raihanun's transformative role in Lombok's Islamic education and organizational development, emphasizing her positive impact on gender transformation and community progress.

The research findings demonstrate various theoretical frameworks, such as gender transformation theory, feminist theories, social transformation theory, and the role of female figures in pioneering Islamic educational institutions (Olaosebikan et al., 2019). First, the Gender Transformation Theory depicts Sitti Raihanun's central role in gender transformation through Islamic education in Lombok. The concept of gender transformation highlights changes in norms, gender roles, and power structures. In this context, Sitti Raihanun becomes a primary agent in changing traditional paradigms related to women's roles, especially in the development of Islamic education (Vásquez-Vera et al., 2023). Her decision to lead the organization and establish educational institutions is a concrete step in changing societal views on women's roles.

Second, Feminist Theories. Feminist theories provide a profound understanding of how Sitti Raihanun, as a female figure, faces challenges and engages in social change (Connell, 2012). The research findings reflect feminist aspects, including women's empowerment, structural changes, and rejection of gender stereotypes. Sitti Raihanun, with her contributions to Islamic education, embodies feminist ideas about empowering women through education and playing an active role in society (Ecevit, 2013).

Third, the Social Transformation Theory can analyze Sitti Raihanun's contributions to Islamic education. Her establishment of schools and Islamic boarding schools positions her as an organizational leader and an agent of social change. This initiative alters local community structures by offering educational opportunities, particularly for women, aligning with the theory's premise of using education to transform societal norms and values (Durrani et al., 2022).

Fourth, the Framework of the Role of Female Figures in Pioneering Islamic Educational Institutions. This framework highlights how Sitti Raihanun, as a female figure, contributes to pioneering Islamic educational institutions (Fan et al., 2021). The research findings reflect that female leadership can shape and lead educational institutions with significant impact. Sitti Raihanun not only creates space for inclusive Islamic education but also inspires changes in social norms related to gender roles in religious education (Fitriyani et al., 2023)

The research delves into Sitti Raihanun's pivotal role in gender transformation and community development through Islamic education in Lombok. Beyond her leadership in NW, she significantly impacts education and Islamic values rooted in her family background and moral values. Her transformative leadership is evident in establishing educational institutions, reflecting inherited trust and responsibility. Charismatic and influential within NW, her recognition as an MPR RI member underscores her national-level impact. She adapts a transformative leadership model to enhance gender transformation in Islamic education, affirming positive contributions to community development.

Theoretical Construction

The theoretical constructions that illustrate the research findings regarding the role of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid in gender transformation, especially in the context of Islamic education development in Lombok, are presented as follows:

1. Transformation Through Education Theory

The research findings indicate that Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid plays a crucial role in changing gender dynamics, mainly through the development of Islamic education (Muqoyyidin, Andik Wahyun, 2022). This theoretical framework identifies education as the primary means to transform societal gender

roles (Sohn, Kitae, 2015). Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid is an organizational leader and an educator, shaping a new generation with inclusive Islamic values (Shalihin, Nurus & Firdaus, 2019). Her establishment of schools and Islamic boarding schools depicts a strategy to promote social change by spreading progressive gender values (Wieringa, Saskia E, 2015).

2. Transformative and Charismatic Leadership Theory

The data analysis shows that Sitti Raihanun applies a model of transformative and charismatic leadership. In the transformative leadership theory, leaders motivate and inspire others to reach their maximum potential (Syafri, Delmira, 2014). Charismatic leadership, on the other hand, relates to the personal appeal and influence of the leader. In response to this, Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid uses charisma and transformative leadership to shape not only the members of her organization but also the surrounding community, primarily through the educational institutions she has established (Syamsudin, 2020).

3. Heritage and Values Inheritance Theory

Family background and the inheritance of moral values from Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid's parents are critical elements in this theoretical construction (Ginsburg et al., 2023). According to this theory, family values and heritage can play a significant role in shaping the personality and role of a leader. The positive inheritance of values from previous generations can serve as a strong foundation for responsible and transformative leadership (Astuti, Yanti Dwi, 2021).

4. Controversy Theory in Evaluating Women's Leadership

Findings noting the existence of controversial views on the capacity of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Majid create a theoretical construction that depicts the evaluation of women's leadership as still influenced by gender stereotypes and diverse perspectives (Bohren et al., 2024). It reflects the need to continually examine and redefine norms related to women's leadership in society (Nasri, 2015).

By integrating these aspects, this theoretical construction provides a conceptual foundation for understanding how the role of female leaders, particularly in the context of Islamic education, can be a primary agent in gender transformation and community development.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid plays a transformative and strategic role in reshaping gender dynamics within Islamic education in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. Her leadership in Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) reflects a unique convergence of inherited values, religious authority, and institutional vision that enables her to mobilize Islamic education for gender equity. Through her consistent dedication, she has succeeded in establishing and developing Islamic educational institutions while simultaneously addressing sociocultural resistance to women's leadership. The findings highlight her application of a transformative and charismatic leadership model that manifests in both organizational development and moral education. Her charisma, rooted in religious lineage and community trust, has enhanced her credibility as a female ulama. This study offers substantial insight into the role of religious women leaders in creating inclusive educational spaces.

The significance of this study lies in its scholarly contribution to the discourse on gender transformation in Islamic education. It challenges the traditionally male-dominated leadership structures in Islamic institutions by presenting empirical evidence of successful female-led religious and educational transformation. Moreover, it expands the theoretical conversation on leadership and gender by integrating perspectives from feminist theory, social transformation, and Islamic pedagogy. The findings emphasize that women's leadership—when grounded in moral values, institutional legitimacy, and social trust—can redefine norms within Islamic educational systems. Thus, the research reinforces the urgency to further recognize and institutionalize women's contributions in religious education, both in Indonesia and globally, as part of a broader effort toward inclusive and just educational paradigms.

Despite its comprehensive scope, this study has limitations, particularly in terms of geographic focus and temporal constraints. Future research should explore similar figures across other regions and assess how different sociopolitical environments affect women's leadership in Islamic education. In addition, longitudinal studies could provide a better understanding of the long-term impact of female-led educational reforms. It is recommended that policymakers and

Islamic educational stakeholders support initiatives led by women and document their roles more systematically. By doing so, we can strengthen the intellectual and institutional ecosystem needed to promote gender-equitable Islamic education that is responsive to contemporary challenges. The story of Sitti Raihanun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid illustrates how transformative leadership, rooted in tradition and vision, can catalyze meaningful change in both education and society.

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